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ABSTRACT

Changes in educational policy concerning the teaching of English as a foreign language (EFL) in Ireland, and events surrounding those changes, are chronicled. The evolution of public agencies and private organizations, including teacher associations, and their roles in effecting change are described. Pressures leading to the formal announcement in January 1991 of an official policy on expansion of EFL instruction are examined, and a followup government policy statement in June 1992 is outlined. It is noted that government and language teaching industry interests in EFL expansion coincided to a great extent during this process, and a December 1993 government effort to reorganize its Advisory Council on English Language Schools (ACELS) attempted to draw two major non-government groups into policy formation. Conflicts over this proposal, particularly those involving participation of a private association of English-language schools, are explained, and the method in which the issues were resolved is described. The full text of the resulting statement of policy concerning academic regulation of EFL instruction is appended. Contains 11 references. (MSE)

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ED 407 872

Academic Regulation of EFL in Ireland: Developments Since 1991

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First developed in Ireland in the sixties, the teaching of English as Foreign Language (EFL) has undergone greater expansion and change since 1991 than in the previous twenty-five years. Inevitably, this increase in provision led to significant pressure for change in all sectors of the Irish EFL industry, in its management structures, its promotional policies, and particularly in the nature of its regulatory procedures. Decisions taken during this fast-changing period will be critical in shaping the future directions of all aspects of the industry. Nowhere is this more true than in the area of EFL academic regulation which, up to recently, had developed very little in this country. The evolution of the events surrounding the academic monitoring in Ireland since 1991 is the subject of this paper. With the recent growth of interest in language in education policies, the case of EFL in Ireland represents an interesting study of the nature of industry and government partnership in an area of importance for economic growth, as well as for the academic development of language teaching internationally.

CHANGES IN THE LATE EIGHTIES

An important impetus was given to the global spread of English as an international language as a result of the massive surge in demand for language training which occurred in the lead-in period to the Single European Act Agreement in 1992 (Etats Généraux des Langues 1989). Ireland was one of the beneficiaries of this international growth and developed in importance as a destination for English language learning

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from the late eighties onwards. The most spectacular growth occurred in English teaching to adults. The increase in numbers can be shown by the growth in the number of English language schools in the country (Advisory Council for English Language Schools 1995) - 22 year-round and 34 summer schools in 1989 rising to 62 year-round and 103 summer schools in 1995. The importance of EFL in public sector third-level institutions also began to emerge. With the increase in EU Erasmus and other programmes of inter-university co-operation, overseas - mainly European - students opted to pursue a portion of their studies in Irish third-level colleges. EFL teacher education and training programmes also came on stream in university institutions, from preparatory certificate to masters level, with many of them funded from the European Social Fund.

THE POSITION OF THE EFL INDUSTRY

Academic monitoring of EFL teaching in Ireland has always been carried out under the auspices of the Irish Department of Education through its Advisory Council on English Language Schools (ACELS). Established in the early seventies, the Advisory Council's membership consisted of representatives of the Department of Education, the Department of Foreign Affairs, Bord Fáilte Eireann and Dublin Tourism. An ACELS News Release (no date) announcing the establishment of the Advisory Council outlined its functions as follows: (a) to study, in all its aspects, the situation in regard to English Language Schools catering for foreign students, (b) to make practical arrangements for the physical and academic inspection of English Language Schools that apply to the Minister for recognition, and (c) to advise the Minister on all matters relating to such schools. In theory, therefore, the terms of reference of ACELS enabled it to consider a wide range of areas of importance to the teaching of English as a Foreign Language, such as teacher training, course certification, syllabus development etc. In practice, however, its main operations were in the area of school registration and inspection. Schools wishing to be registered paid a fee and those which met the standards laid down were entitled to display the legend 'recognised by the Department of Education' on their promotional literature.

Concerned about aspects of the operation of the ACELS inspection and registration process (Recognised English Language Schools Association 1993:1), the EFL industry and teachers began to press for improvements in the manner in which it conducted its business and for greater consultation between the industry and the Advisory Council. This impetus for upgrading and consultation became much stronger as student numbers began to increase in the late eighties. The prime mover in the campaign was the school owners through their professional association, the Student Organisers' Association of Ireland (SOAI), which later developed into the Recognised English Language Schools Association (RELSA). RELSA was founded in 1988, and in the years which followed attracted a significant increase in its membership. This now stands at seventy-five schools and accounts for almost ninety per cent of the entire EFL industry in Ireland. An important feature of the organisation is that it draws its members not just from the private sector but also from the public sector. Since its inception, its functions too have grown significantly, and it is now engaged in a wide range of academic, social, cultural and administrative functions. Two of its most notable achievements have been the development of a preparatory EFL teacher training certificate and the establishment of a joint marketing group Marketing English in Ireland (MEI) in 1993. The teacher training initiative was taken to combat the widespread practice of weekend and two or three day courses offered, and in the absence of government initiative in this area. In view of its proactive stance on a range of EFL-related professional issues, not surprisingly, RELSA was to the forefront of the campaign for the upgrading of ACELS. In 1990, it presented a set of proposals and guidelines to ACELS. This was followed by further representation in early 1991 (RELSA 1993:2)

Position of EFL teachers

As well as the school owners, EFL teachers, through their professional association, the National Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language in Ireland (NATEFLI), also pressed for improvements in academic monitoring procedures. In common with RELSA, the association saw the need for higher standards in the practice of EFL and greater professionalism in its organisation. As part of its own programme of professional development in the late 1980s, the fledgling NATEFLI decided to co-host the international IATEFL

conference and welcomed almost one thousand conference participants to Dublin in 1990. This was a huge and generous undertaking by Irish EFL professionals, designed to put Ireland on the international EFL map at an important time in the global and Irish development of EFL.

UPGRADING OF ACELS

The movement for the upgrading of ACELS focused on three points - improved quality in operational procedures, the creation of a strong central government body and greater input from those running the industry. The issue of quality and the need to develop professional standards in EFL was central if Ireland was to be in line with best international practice and compete effectively. As stated earlier, the EFL industry in Ireland was still relatively young. According to Doyle (1990: 11), it had come from simple beginnings and was, by and large, still a simple activity. In the late eighties, concentration in the industry was still on general English taught to younger age-groups in short intensive courses, mainly in the summer. Firms were small, many of them of a part-time nature. The specialist high value end of the market - Language for Special Purposes (LSP) - was not so well developed. Despite increasing international demand for English, British- and American-based English schools had the edge. The important report *English: A World Commodity* (McCallen 1989) did not even mention Ireland as a destination for learning English.

Upgrading meant getting to grips with issues of professional concern in the EFL industry - teacher training, certification, materials production, syllabus - not to mention dealing with the problem of schools not operating to an appropriate standard. The model aspired to by Irish EFL professionals was that of a single, independent agency with state support which would set, implement and monitor standards in a range of areas. Several possible models of well-established, well-funded agencies 'marketing' national languages existed e.g. Goethe Institut, British Council, Instituto di Cultura Italiana, the Alliance Française and others. In addition to the above, consultation was an important issue. Both the school owners and the teachers saw it as essential that they would have an input into the discussions and decisions which directly concerned their professional competence and their livelihoods.

THE POSITION OF GOVERNMENT

As the industry's campaign for upgrading began to gain momentum, impetus for change in the EFL monitoring authority also came from the state, in particular from those agencies with a role in tourism. Bord Fáilte, the first state agency to involve itself in EFL (Penston 1993: 11), had played an important part in the early development of the EFL industry, along with CTT (later to become An Bord Tráchtála) and, to a lesser extent, the Industrial Development Authority. All of these were now pressing for change. The reasoning behind this was self-evident. A small open economy located on the periphery of Europe, Ireland is dependent not just on increasing manufacturing exports but on selling international services. Tourism has been identified as a potential area of significant economic growth, and in a broadly based strategy to attract visitors to this country, international education services were targeted for development. As part of this, 'EFL linguistic stays' were identified as an important niche market product.

A formal enunciation by government of an official policy on the upgrading of EFL was set out for the first time in the Programme for Economic and Social Progress (Rialtas na hÉireann 1991: 47) in January 1991. It was included in the chapter dealing with employment and training, and in a section dealing with the development of 'Ireland as an International Education Centre'. It stated that government had accepted a recommendation for the 'Exploitation of opportunities in teaching English as a Foreign Language, with the assistance of Bord Fáilte and CTT and reconstitution of the Advisory Council for English Language Schools, under the aegis of the Department of Education, to control standards in teacher training, students performance and accreditation of schools and courses'. Thus, the statement in the PESP was an attempt by government to raise the profile of this new and expanding national export industry, which it saw as an opportunity for commercial exploitation. The role of an independent body was considered central to the development of EFL and the main thrust of government policy was the reconstitution of the Advisory Council. This would have, amongst other tasks, the responsibility of overseeing educational standards and would include representatives of the main parties involved - the state agencies, Bord Fáilte and CTT, working with the Department of Education.

The task of monitoring the implementation of the commitments of the PESP in the area of international education services including EFL, was initially entrusted to a committee working under the auspices of the Department of the Taoiseach, and which later came to be known as the 'Taoiseach's Committee'. A Working Group on Ireland as an International Education Centre was established in early 1991 and continued to meet until December 1993 (Working Group on Ireland as an International Education Centre 1994: 2). Though the Working Group invited and received submissions from the EFL industry, its membership was confined to government departments, state sponsored bodies and the social partners. The Working Group's deliberations were conducted confidentially in the main, but they clearly influenced government policy on the development both of EFL and international education services. In January 1992, government thinking had advanced to the point that the then Minister for Education (Mr Noel Davern TD) announced approval of proposals to develop and co-ordinate EFL and to promote Ireland as an international education centre. ACELS would be reconstituted as a company limited by guarantee under the aegis of the Department of Education. A second company, later to become the International Education Board Ireland (IEBI), would be established to promote Ireland as an international education centre.

THE GREEN PAPER

Published in June 1992, eighteen months after the PESP, the Green Paper - *Education for a Changing World*, further expanded on government thinking in EFL. Chapter eleven dealt with Ireland as an International Education Centre. In terms of general policy, the position outlined in the Green Paper was essentially the same as that included in the PESP. The rationale for the development of EFL was wholly commercial with emphasis on the financial opportunities for Ireland. The Advisory Council would be reconstituted. The main participants would be representatives of government departments, state agencies and EFL course providers. The Council would be required to be self-financing. The range of functions for the proposed reconstituted ACELS were extended and were as follows:

- To control standards in teacher training, both initial and in-career, for EFL teachers in Ireland, and to maintain a register of such qualified teachers.
- To control standards in accreditation of EFL schools and courses.
- To ensure the establishment of appropriate tests for EFL students and to control standards in the certification of their performance.
- To promote an Irish cultural dimension in the EFL courses, particularly in the textbooks used in its schools network.
- To undertake whatever other functions are considered necessary to promote the public interest, in so far as teaching English as a foreign language is concerned, which may reasonably be regarded as falling within its remit.

GOVERNMENT AND INDUSTRY INTERESTS

A striking feature of the development of EFL in the late eighties and early nineties is the extent to which the government and the EFL industry's general interests coincided. Both parties were pressing for improvement in the academic monitoring of EFL and both saw the importance of the development of an independent government-run agency. An opportunity clearly existed which could lead quickly to the creation of an effective academic structure to help develop EFL and to capitalise on its massive expansion in Ireland. The almost certain availability of funding from European sources to cover at least some of the expenses was an added bonus at this time. The immediate success of the project should have been assured. That the fulfilment of the hopes for early success was not easily realised is evident from the fact that, between 1991 and 1994, the achievements were slight. Despite the common objectives of government and industry for EFL at this stage, very real differences separated the parties in terms of their respective attitudes to how these common goals should be achieved. The account of how such a promising initiative took so long to progress, and the many stages of its development to a final and satisfactory outcome, is the subject of the next section of the paper.

Almost one year had to elapse between Mr Davern's announcement in January 1992 and the Department of Education's decision to initiate the process of convening the reconstituted ACELS. In December 1993, almost two years after the PESP, the Department of Education wrote to

RELSA and NATEFLI indicating that the reconstituted Council would be set up under its aegis and inviting them to nominate a representative. The terms of reference outlined for the new body were broadly similar to those contained in the Green Paper with one additional difference. This was that 'in addition to the educational functions, the new body will also have a broadened promotional role in relation to EFL in general'. The body would be set up as a limited company with a Memorandum and Articles of Association under the Department of Education. It would still carry advisory status. The incoming Board would have the opportunity of looking at the draft Memorandum and Articles of Association. These were made available in April 1993.

DIFFICULTIES WITH THE PROPOSAL

Although some of its members had misgivings about aspects of the Department's handling of the matter, the professional body representing EFL teachers, NATEFLI, by and large welcomed the proposal (National Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language 1993). RELSA, however, reacted with disappointment and dismay. They had several objections. Their greatest difficulty was with the representation they were offered on the new body. Concerned that they had not been involved in the consultative process leading to the reconvening of the Council, they believed their only hope of success was to influence it from within. Moreover, they believed they had been promised two positions and had publicly stated that these were a pre-condition for their co-operation. A matter of concern was the proposed extended remit of the Council particularly in view of the lack of professional EFL representation on the Council. Finance too was an issue as the Council would rely heavily, if not exclusively, on the fees of the membership and yet remain advisory to the Minister. By this stage too, RELSA was frustrated by the slow progress being achieved at a time of huge change in the industry.

There was a profound difference between the official government perspective and that of the schools on how to proceed. Whilst the schools were coping with the problems and challenges posed by the remarkable growth in the industry, and urgently needed what they perceived to be workable solutions to problems of academic standards, the Department's concerns were with due process and official

procedures. As can be seen in the correspondence between the two parties, and to which the author has been given access by RELSA, the Department's aim was essentially to implement government policy and to set up a body exactly as described in the various official documents mentioned earlier. It was not its function to propose a blueprint for the industry and it did not see itself as spearheading a plan for the academic development of ACELS. All decision-making functions would be fulfilled by the new body as soon as it was incorporated.

A RELSA ACADEMIC MONITORING BODY

By mid-1993, it was clear that the major differences of opinion between RELSA and the Department of Education, on the matter of the Council and specifically on the matter of representation, were reaching breaking point. The Department addressed the issue of increased membership by stating that provision existed in the Memorandum and Articles to appoint extra members once the Council had begun to meet. The industry believed that if they accepted the representation arrangements on offer, they would buy into a system in which they had no confidence and which, up to then, had disregarded their views. Too much was at stake for them to concede on this issue.

At a general meeting in August 1993, the RELSA membership, having considered all aspects, unanimously rejected the government proposal for a reconstituted ACELS and, consequent on this, agreed that it was not appropriate to nominate a member to the new body. Having broken this link with the Department, the inevitable consequence was to proceed to set up its own academic monitoring body. On 3rd September 1993, the Department of Education was informed of the membership's response to the proposals and its intentions for the future. RELSA was at pains to point out that the establishment of the new body should not be seen as a rift between it and the Department, but rather as a 'coming of age' for RELSA which would create a climate of more effective communication and liaison between the EFL industry and the government.

Though it represented a major challenge for its limited resources, the decision of RELSA to move in this direction was neither new nor surprising. A portion of the membership, weary of expecting change to

come from central government, had long believed that the best opportunities for growth lay with RELSA taking greater control of its own affairs. The achievements of professional English associations in countries newly arrived on the EFL scene - Australia and New Zealand for example - provided inspiring models. With the growing confidence of the Irish EFL industry, it was felt that, ultimately, an act of greater self-reliance by the members could provide impetus for growth and development. For many other members, however, the move by RELSA to set up its own body represented a huge break with practice and the loss of the coveted Department of Education recognition. Had it not been for the breakdown in the negotiations with the Department, it is likely that the proposal to set up a RELSA monitoring body would never have got sufficient support from the membership.

The matter of advising on the implementation of the RELSA recognition and inspection scheme was entrusted to a RELSA Academic Council. By the 19th November 1993, a proposal for the recognition and inspection scheme was in place and was communicated to the Department. This proposal was also presented to and approved by the membership. At no time was it RELSA's intention to have ACELS disbanded. The objective was to operate its own academic monitoring scheme, funded by the members and possibly from European sources, to maintain and develop links with the Department of Education, and ultimately to have its approval of the scheme. As time was of the essence, and to get the scheme up and running as soon as possible, the post of Academic Manager for the new scheme was advertised by RELSA in the Irish Times on 26th November 1993.

DEPARTMENTAL REACTION

Not anxious to proceed to reconstitute ACELS without the nomination of RELSA, for which it had been pressing for some time, the Department of Education was suddenly spurred into action. In its letter of 7th December 1993, the Department, whilst acknowledging the position of RELSA as outlined in the letter of the previous 3rd September, indicated that it was proceeding to organize the first meeting of the new ACELS on 17th December. Once again it invited RELSA to nominate a member. The Department's letter also made it clear that the new ACELS would carry no financial obligation for RELSA, and that

the Minister would look favourably on increased representation from the industry. This, however, was not enough to bring RELSA on board. Unwilling to nominate a member to ACELS, RELSA was not, however, in favour of breaking off links with the Department. It was on this basis that it sought to meet the Department of Education at that time, with a view to appraising it of the RELSA proposals in the context of the new ACELS. As events turned out, this meeting was to be the first in a series of meetings between the industry and the Department of Education. It was also felt by RELSA to be one of the first opportunities for genuine exchange and discussion of matters of mutual concern. More importantly, it inaugurated a period of intense and lengthy negotiation meetings between both parties. On the table for these meetings were the RELSA proposals, possible links between the Department of Education and the industry, the future of the EFL industry and the potential role of the new ACELS. Whilst almost all of the negotiations were conducted confidentially between the Department's and RELSA officials, discussions were far-reaching and felt by RELSA to be constructive and positive. Although it became clear that the Department would not take on the RELSA scheme *in toto*, meaningful input and representation from the industry into whatever scheme was developed seemed to be a distinct possibility.

By early February 1994, discussions between the Department of Education and RELSA had progressed considerably. RELSA wrote to the Department on 7th February summarising its view of the position reached at this point. The letter stated that, following the discussions which had taken place, RELSA's understanding was that there was general agreement concerning the implementation of a co-operative scheme, based on genuine partnership, and involving the industry and the Department of Education. They then went on to present a detailed plan for the development of EFL academic regulation in Ireland involving a significant input from the industry, which they believed had been agreed in principle. The essential characteristic of this was a multi-tiered structure, consisting of an Advisory Panel made up of leading academics, an Academic Committee to oversee the management of the scheme of inspection and an Executive to manage the inspection scheme. An Inspectorate would also be put in place. A significant role for RELSA at all levels of this multi-tiered structure was envisaged.

Such a scheme would, RELSA believed, be acceptable to the membership.

FURTHER BREAKDOWNS IN THE NEGOTIATIONS

But events were not that simple. In a reply on 18th February, the Department of Education indicated significant objections to the RELSA proposals as set out. Among several difficulties raised, the matter of RELSA representation - the stumbling block from the beginning of the negotiations and by now an issue of major symbolic importance - once again became the divisive issue. Whilst RELSA representation on the Council had risen to two members, other new members were also being proposed, leaving RELSA in as weak a position as ever. The Department's proposal was felt to be unacceptable and the reaction of RELSA was swift and decisive. At an Extraordinary General Meeting called for 3rd March, a motion was proposed (a) to reject the Department of Education proposals, (b) not to nominate anyone to the Board of the proposed ACELS and (c) to proceed immediately to implement the RELSA academic monitoring scheme, to be administered by a new council called the Irish National Council for English Language Teaching (INCELT). Despite all the anxieties and concerns about the implications of breaking with the Department of Education, the motion was passed with an overwhelming majority.

At this point, it seemed as if the long-threatened break between both parties was inevitable. The rift seemed all the more certain when, shortly after the 3rd March meeting, the Department of Education, on 10th March, sent a circular to all English Language Schools - 'Note from Department of Education for Information of English Language Schools. **B20.1B**'. The Department's official position, as set out in the circular, was to the point. ACELS would be reconstituted, it would be funded generously, RELSA's views could be taken on board, but - and this was the rub - 'there would be no question of collaboration of any state agencies in the marketing of schools which do not enjoy the official recognition of the Minister for Education which could only be given on foot of a recommendation from the reconstituted ACELS'.

A Basis for Agreement

But at the very stage that this document was being circulated to schools and schools were contemplating how best to react, other events were in train. The senior negotiator on behalf of RELSA was called to an informal meeting with Department of Education senior officials around this time. The meeting occurred on Thursday 31st March 1994 and further frank and open discussions took place. A breakthrough was achieved. On the 25th April, it was possible for an agreed statement to be issued jointly by the Department of Education and RELSA. The full text of this statement is contained in the Appendix and it sets out the proposed structure for the future academic regulation of EFL in Ireland. On the thorny matter of representation, RELSA was given three places on the Board. From RELSA's point of view, the most significant part of the statement, however, is contained in the fourth paragraph: 'It is understood that the proposed new ACELS will reflect the greater understanding of RELSA's role in the EFL sector and the productive partnership which has been brought about between government and the industry.' This was the long sought for acknowledgement of their role in the development of EFL in Ireland over the years, and of their potential contribution to its success in the future. Summing up the results achieved by the months and years of negotiation, the Chairperson wrote to the members on 25th April 1994 recommending them to accept the proposals saying: 'The situation as it now stands allows for recognition by the Department of Education, through a greatly improved ACELS plus a new council of our own through which we can have our independent input in the development of our product.' The proposal was recommended to the RELSA membership and approved by them.

Reconstitution of ACELS

Almost a year has elapsed since these difficult but ultimately positive events occurred and, at last, progress has been achieved. The new body began meeting soon after the joint statement was issued. One of the most important initial tasks was the appointment of an executive and a post as Academic Manager/Executive Director was advertised early in December 1994. The new company - Advisory Council on English Language Schools (ACELS) Ltd. - was incorporated on 28th February 1995 and the first official meeting of the new company took place on

13th March 1995. At time of writing, the appointment of the new Academic Manager/Executive Director has been made and premises have been found.

A Final Comment

The resolution of the problems relating to the upgrading of ACELS and the establishment of the new council have provided a great sense of relief to all EFL professionals in Ireland. The successful outcome should not, however, blind us to the difficulties and challenges which face the new Council. There is no room for complacency. In effect, the task of regulating the teaching of English as a Foreign Language in this country is only just beginning, and a great deal remains to be done to bring Ireland into line with other countries by setting and implementing national standards in areas such as teacher education, course accreditation and materials development. Whilst up to now, Ireland has been concentrating on laying the foundations for development, issues of quality control and professional standards in ELT have been the subject of increasing world-wide scrutiny and attention (Brumfit and Coleman 1995: 176-184). Amongst the many reasons for this increase in interest, is the growth in importance of market forces in ELT and ever-increasing competition not just among private sector organisations, but also between public and private sector institutions as they compete with each other for students. Another important factor is increased international (particularly EU) co-operation in professional matters, with clear implications for schools, teachers, and students of the establishment of joint educational frameworks and international accreditation systems. Against this background of ever-increasing competition and standards, ACELS will find that, in the area of EFL academic regulation, it has a lot of ground to make up, much to learn from developments in other countries and a great deal to achieve. As it now begins to tackle its tough agenda, hopefully, the dynamic and energetic spirit which drove the events of the last four years and brought them to such a satisfactory conclusion, can still be found to inspire further developments and a better future for EFL in Ireland.

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APPENDIX

AGREED STATEMENT ISSUED JOINTLY BY THE

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND RELSA

25th April 1994

The following is a record of a meeting which took place on Thursday, 31st March 1994 between representatives of the Department of Education and RELSA concerning the reconstitution of ACELS.

This meeting discussed industry concerns regarding the intended organisational competence and structures of the new ACELS.

The department stressed their desire to address these concerns in a way that would be consistent with Government considerations.

It is understood that the proposed new ACELS will reflect the greater understanding of RELSA'S role in the EFL sector and the productive partnership which has been brought about between government and the industry.

While the organisational arrangements for the new ACELS are a matter for final ratification by the board of the newly constituted ACELS. It is hoped that the efforts of the last few months will be reflected in the adoption of the following multi-tiered structure to include: -

1. The board of the newly constituted ACELS will have overall responsibility. It will make recommendations to the Department of Education on the schools to be accorded official recognition by the Department. Authority will be sought for the following composition of the new ACELS on the understanding the Minister reserves the right to appoint at some future date, if she considers it necessary, a further person to the remaining vacancy on the board.

- Chairperson - to be nominated by the Minister
- 1 representative Department of Education
- 1 representative Department of Justice
- 1 representative Department of Foreign Affairs
- 1 representative Bord Fáilte
- 1 representative Dublin Tourism
- 1 representative NATEFLI
- 3 representatives RELSA
- 1 independent academic nominated by Minister for Education

2. An Advisory Panel to consist of members with a national and international profile in the world of EFL who may be called on to advise the other tiers of the structure and Board of ACELS.

   - Standards in teacher training, both initial and inservice, for EFL (English as a foreign language) teachers in Ireland
   - Standards on accreditation of EFL schools and courses
   - Appropriate tests for EFL students and the standards in the certification of their performance.
   - Other areas deemed appropriate by the board of ACELS
   - RELSA may submit names for consideration for this panel. The role of this panel would be consultative

3. **Academic Manager**

   He/She will be a person with extensive experience in EFL and will have a brief to develop the new system of inspection and recognition and other academic matters.

   The Academic Manager will be appointed by the ACELS Board in accordance with the selection arrangements to be determined by the Board. The position will be advertised nationally and internationally.

   It is envisaged that a RELSA nominee will participate in the selection procedure subject to approval of the ACELS Board.

4. **An Academic Committee** chaired by a RELSA nominee and consisting of the Academic Manager, a representative from NATEFLI and two representatives from RELSA. This committee will liaise with the Academic Manager and will have an advisory role in the academic matters. The Committee will make recommendations to the Board of ACELS on -

   - Overall academic criteria for the continuing recognition of schools;
   - The standards of teacher training both initial and inservice and how they are to be achieved and maintained
   - The content of TEFL courses
   - Appropriate tests for EFL students
   - Matters where general academic advice would be required relating to the work of the Academic Manager and to the responsibility of the Board.
   - Other matters deemed appropriate by the Board of ACELS

5. **The Inspectorate -** Subject to approval of ACELS Board it is envisaged that a team of assessors will be appointed by a selected board consisting of

   - Chairperson of the ACELS Board
   - Chairperson of the Academic Committee
   - Academic Manager

   Appointments would be part-time and contractual.

6. **Cost of Recognition**

   This format does not envisage any increase in fees for TEFL schools recognition in the immediate future. The fees to be charged in future years would be a matter for determination by the Board of ACELS.